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ABSTRACT

In 1975, The Texas Board of Education adopted instructional resources as a priority area and chose Learning Resources Centers (LRC) to be used as the means for implementation. Title IVC funds were granted for the 1976-1977, 1977-1978, and 1978-1979 school years to develop, plan, and field-test an LRC model which used a paraprofessional staff supervised by a professional librarian/Learning Resources Director. Stages of Concern Questionnaires (SoCQ) were given to 47 rural school teachers to measure how individuals involved in the development and adopting processes of an innovation perceived those processes and what their concerns about the innovation might be. Of those teachers selected, 30 completed the questionnaire. The SoCQ consisted of 35 statements which reflected 7 stages of concern: awareness, informational, personal, management, consequences, collaboration, and refocusing. Data indicated that most respondents were unaware of the LRC program but open to information about it. After a review of the data, some participants were interviewed. While most of those interviewed used the LRC program, few understood the concept or philosophy. There was confusion between the concept of an LRC and that of a school library program. Consequently, the project's implementation activities were modified to place additional attention on increasing teachers' awareness and knowledge of the LRC program. (CM)

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CONCERNS ABOUT THE ADOPTION OF THE LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER PROGRAM IN A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Educational changes have been occurring very rapdily in the last three decades. Educators, involved in all phases of education, have been faced with scores of new ideas, teaching techniques, and innovations. After concepts have been developed and implemented, all too often too little time has been spent in evaluating the implementation process. This paper reports an example of one approach to such evaluation.

The Learning Resources Center

In 1975, the Texas State Board of Education adopted instructional resources as a priority area and chose Learning Resources Centers (LRC) to be used as the means for implementation. The Learning Resources Center concept attempts to broaden "the traditional role of a school library by assisting learners in developing the skills to locate, evaluate, and synthesize information in solving problems. It provides not only learning materials but also

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*The research described herein was conducted under contract with the Office of Education (OE) and the National Institute of Education (NIE). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of OE or NIE, and no endorsement by OE or NIE should be inferred.

audio-visual equipment, personnel, facilities and environments in order to satisfy the needs of pupils and teachers in a planned educational process" (Texas Education Agency, 1974, p. 1). The school administration in Hays Consolidated ISD, Hays County, Texas, concurred with this state priority but realized that most small, rural school districts would find it difficult to implement the LRC concept, primarily because of financial limitations. Because Hays administration felt that there was a strong need for the realistic and economical development of the LRC program, the district requested and was granted Title IVC funds for the 1976-77, 1977-78, and 1978-79 school years to develop, plan, and field test an LRC system model which uses a paraprofessional staff supervised by a professional librarian/Learning Resources Director.

Evaluation of the development of the LRC model proved to be difficult. Given the limited staff, time and financial constraints, many techniques could not be realistically used. However, one particular aspect of the adoption process did seem to be suitable for assessment -- how individuals involved in the development and adoption processes perceived these processes and their concerns about them. The Concerns-Based Adoption Model Project at The University of Texas at Austin has developed a procedure for measuring the concerns of teachers involved in innovation adoption (Hall, George & Rutherford, 1977). This paper reports the use of the Stages of Concern Questionnaire to measure teachers' concerns about using the LRC model.

Review of Research

During the last forty years, much research has been conducted on innovation theory in various subject fields. Everett Rogers defines an innovation as "an idea perceived as new by the individual. It really matters little, as

far as human behavior is concerned, whether or not an idea is 'objectively' new as measured by the amount of time elapsed since its first use or discovery. It is the newness of the idea to the individual that determines his reaction to it" (1962, p. 13). According to Rogers, "the adoption process is the mental process through which an individual passes from first hearing about an innovation to final adoption... The adoption process is conceptualized in five stages: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption" (1962, p. 81). The fundamental difference between the adoption process and the diffusion process is that the adoption process deals with the adoption of a new idea by an individual while the diffusion process deals with the spread of new ideas in a social system. Since Roger's major thrust is toward diffusion theory and its relation to the adoption process, his basic premises on the adoption process do not reflect some important research in social psychology. As Havelock points out in Planning for Innovation, "Rogers excluded two major blocks of research in making his conclusions: (1) the very extensive set of general and experimental research findings in social psychology having to do with the influence process, attitude change, group behavior, and organizational behavior; and (2) research dealing with major personal and social change where a particular 'innovation' is not clearly identifiable" (1969, p. 3).

In considering the idea of the adoption process, the implementation and adoption of an innovation cannot be separated from an individual's personal, psychological and social make-up. That is, the adoption process cannot be realistically evaluated without looking at the individual's concerns about the innovation.

Research in the area of concerns about educational innovations began in the 1930's in Great Britain with a study being made of the problems and satisfactions of student and experienced teachers (Phillips, 1932). Since that

time several studies have beer conducted with pre-service (student) teachers in regard to their anxieties and feelings (e.g., Thompson, 1963).

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, Frances Fuller expanded upon this research and, using a clinical approach, developed a concept of the sequence of the concerns of teachers toward teaching. Her research dealt primarily with student teachers and their concerns about: (1) a pre-teaching phase (one of basic nonconcern); (2) an early teaching phase in which the student teacher has definite concerns about how he or she is teaching and relating to the cooperating teacher; and (3) late concerns which are those dealing with student learning and professional development. Fuller later refined this basic concerns model into one having three levels of concerns: self, task, and impact (1973).

In the mid-1970's, staff at The University of Texas Research and Development Center for Teacher Education used Fuller's work as the basis for a project entitled The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The focus of this project is "on researching the highly personal experiences and phenomena encountered by individual educators in schools and colleges as they 'adopt' educational innovations" (Hall & Rutherford, 1975, p. 228). The CBAM Project defines the concern concept as "the composite representation of the feelings, preoccupation, thought, and consideration given to a particular issue or task. Each person perceives and mentally contends with a given issue differently; thus, there are different kinds of concerns" (Hall, et. al, 1977, p. 5). How an individual perceives the innovation depends on his or her involvement with it.

The CBAM staff developed two complementary procedures to determine how innovations were adopted, Stages of Concern About the Innovation (SoC) and Levels of Use of the Innovation (LoU). These dimensions focused on feelings

and thoughts (Stages of Concern) and on behavioral aspects (Levels of Use) of the individual's involvement with the innovation. Since the Levels of Use cannot be assessed by a questionnaire and resources were not available to interviews, no Levels of Use data were collected in this study.

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model postulates seven different Stages of Concern, as specified in Figure 1. According to the model, as individuals become aware of and consider using an innovation, their most intense concerns are self-oriented. They are concerned about what the innovation is and what the use of the innovation means for them personally. As use of the innovation begins, users have more intense task concerns. If and when these management tasks are resolved, the users begin feeling impact concerns more intensely, including how are others using it, how it affects learning, and whether there is any way to improve the innovation (Hall, et. al, 1977, p. 36).

Methodology

The Stage of Concerns Questionnaire (SoCQ) consists of 35 statements of concern, each of which reflects one of the seven stages described in Figure 1. There are five items for each stage. The respondent indicates the extent to which each item is "true of me now" by circling a number on a "1" to "7" scale. A response of "1" indicates "not true of me now;" a response of "7" indicates "very true of me now." In addition, a "0" response is provided for the respondent to indicate the item is irrelevant.

For this study, the statements were modified slightly, under the guidance of the CBAM staff, by replacing the words "this innovation" or "the new program" with "the LRC" (Appendix A contains a copy of the questionnaire).

Approximately 50% (97) of the 190 teachers in the district were randomly selected to complete the SoC questionnaire. No attempt was made to select

Figure 1

STAGES OF CONCERN ABOUT THE INNOVATION*

0 *AWARENESS:* Little concern about or involvement with the innovation is indicated.

1 *INFORMATIONAL:* A general awareness of the innovation and interest in learning more detail about it is indicated. The person seems to be unworried about himself/herself in relation to the innovation. She/he is interested in substantive aspects of the innovation in a selfless manner such as general characteristics, effects, and requirements for use.

2 *PERSONAL:* Individual is uncertain about the demands of the innovation, his/her inadequacy to meet those demands, and his/her role with the innovation. This includes analysis of his/her role in relation to the reward structure of the organization, decision making and consideration of potential conflicts with existing structures or personal commitment. Financial or status implications of the program for self and colleagues may also be reflected.

3 *MANAGEMENT:* Attention is focused on the processes and tasks of using the innovation and the best use of information and resources. Issues related to efficiency, organizing, managing, scheduling, and time demands are utmost.

4 *CONSEQUENCE:* Attention focuses on impact of the innovation on students in his/her immediate sphere of influence. The focus is on relevance of the innovation for students, evaluation of student outcomes, including performance and competencies, and changes needed to increase student outcomes.

5 *COLLABORATION:* The focus is on coordination and cooperation with others regarding use of the innovation.

6 *REFOCUSING:* The focus is on exploration of more universal benefits from the innovation, including the possibility of major changes or replacement with a more powerful alternative. Individual has definite ideas about alternatives to the proposed or existing form of the innovation.

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*Original concept from Hall, G. E., Wallace, R. C., Jr., & Dossett, W. A. A developmental conceptualization of the adoption process within educational institutions. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1973.

teachers who were definitely users of the LRC program, since feedback was wanted from all teachers regardless of teaching area or job responsibilities. The questionnaires were placed in teachers' mailboxes with an explanatory memo stating the purpose and asking that completed questionnaires be placed in the LRC mailbox. As shown in Table 1, 30 teachers, or 31% of those selected, completed and returned the questionnaire.

Campuses	Total number of teachers by campus	Number given questionnaire	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Elementary				
Site 1	35	18	4	22
Site 2	27	14	4	29
Site 3	16	8	4	50
Secondary				
Site 4	75	38	14	37
Site 5	37	19	4	21

Table 1. Number and Percentage of Respondents by Campus

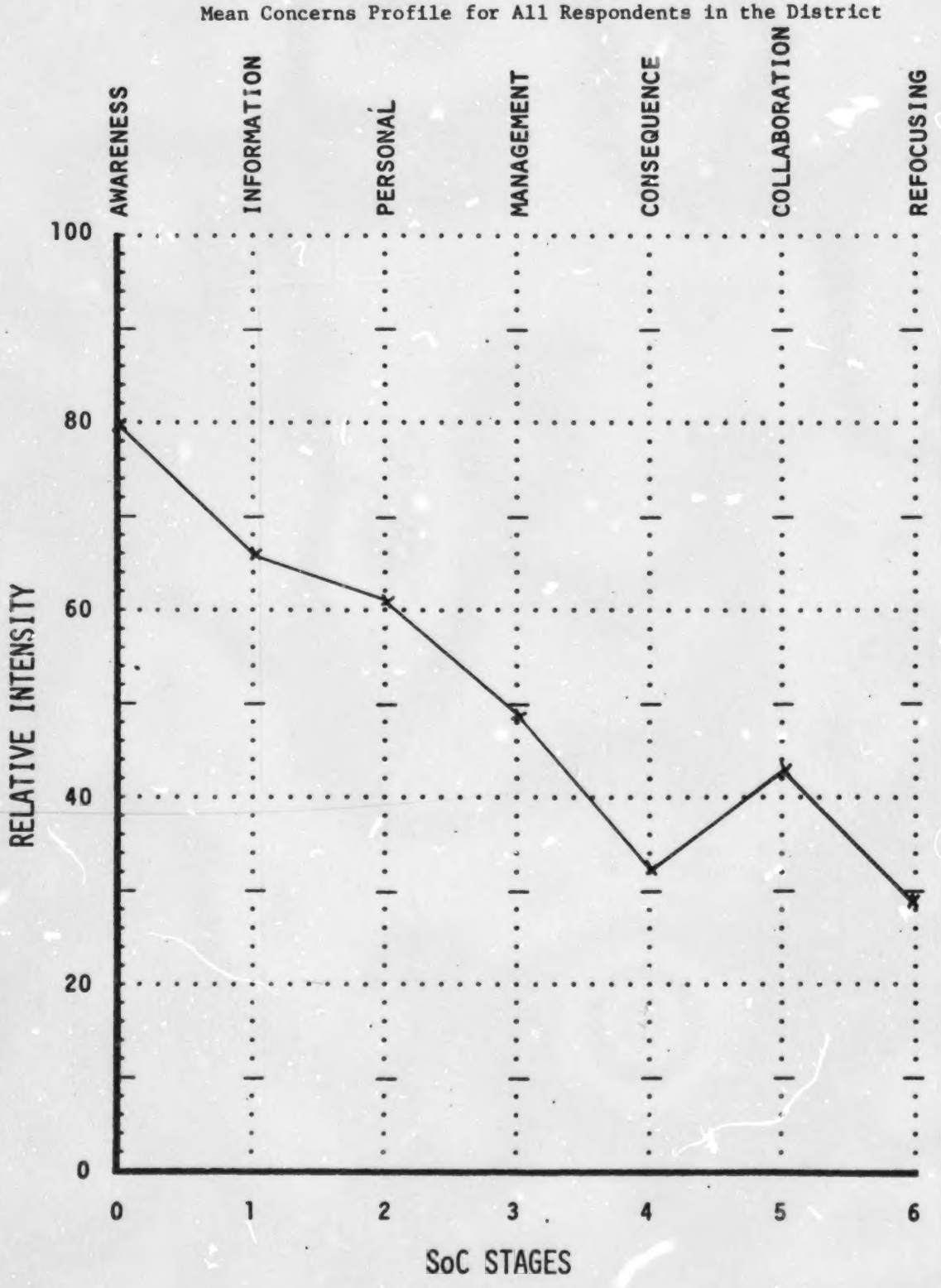
Although the completed questionnaire can be handscored easily according to the instructions given in the Stages of Concern manual, the district had access to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model Project's Fortran computer program to score its set of questionnaires.

Findings

Figure 2 shows the mean concerns profile for all respondents in the district. The highest concerns are on Stages 0, 1, and 2. The lowest concerns are on Stages 4 and 6. Respondents indicated strong agreement with such items as:

Figure 2

Mean Concerns Profile for All Respondents in the District



"I don't even know what the LRC program is" (Stage 0: Awareness).

"I have a very limited knowledge about the LRC program" (Stage 1: Information).

"I would like to know how my teaching or administration is supposed to change" (Stage 2: Personal).

Respondents indicated relatively less concern on items such as:

"I am concerned about students' attitudes toward the LRC program" (Stage 4: Consequence).

"I know of some other approaches that might work better" (Stage 6: Refocusing).

This profile is characteristic of individuals who have little knowledge of the innovation (high Stage 0 scores). They view the LRC program from a positive perspective (Stage 1 is somewhat higher than Stage 2). They do not have a great number of management concerns (medium intensity Stage 3) and are not intensely concerned about the innovation's consequences for students (low Stages 4 and 5). The low tailing-off Stage 6 score suggests that the individuals do not have other ideas that would be potentially competitive with the innovation. The overall profile suggests these respondents are interested, though not highly concerned about the innovation and positively disposed toward it.

The profile in Figure 2 shows the mean percentiles for all respondents. Another way to look at these data is to examine each respondent's profile, find the highest percentile, and construct a distribution of high Stage of Concern for the respondents.

Table 2 displays the number of individuals that are high in each stage and the percentage of the total group this represents. More than half (53%) of the respondents' most intense concerns were on Stage 0. Sixteen percent of the respondents wanted more information about the LRC program, as evidenced in highest Stage 1 scores, while six percent had personal concerns (Stage 2).

	Stages of Concern						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency	16	5	2	4	0	2	1
Percentage	53	16	6	13	0	6	3

Table 2. Distribution of High Stage of Concern for All Respondents

Thirteen percent of the participants had highest Stage 3 scores, indicating intense management concerns. Six percent expressed their highest concerns on Stage 5, cooperation and collaboration with others concerning the LRC program. Only one respondent (3%) felt that there might be another way to develop the same concept (Stage 6). None of the respondents expressed their most intense concerns about the impact of the LRC program on the students and learning (Stage 4).

When the individual campus responses are analyzed, some differences between campuses are apparent. Table 3 shows the SoC profiles for each site. Site 3 expressed higher concerns on Stage 1 than Stage 0 and had lower Stage 2 concerns than any other site. This indicates these respondents are more aware of the innovation and less concerned about how it might affect them personally, but still have a need for additional information about it. At Site 2, Stage 1 concerns were lower than Stage 2 concerns. This indicates a high concern about the possible impact the innovation might have on them personally and less of a desire to learn more about the innovation. The low Stage 6 scores at Site 2 indicates these respondents do not have a desire to do something else; they are apparently simply apprehensive and disinterested. The other sites' profiles are very similar to that shown in Figure 2.

Campus	Stages of Concern						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Site 1	74	76	76	39	41	58	40
Site 2	72	44	59	38	22	55	17
Site 3	64	72	47	50	22	35	34
Site 4	87	69	65	60	32	40	28
Site 5	83	60	53	29	48	36	26

Table 3. SoC Profiles for Each Site
Mean Percentile Scores

Conclusions and Discussion

The major inference from these data are that most of the respondents were unaware of the LRC program but open to information about it. "Nonusers' concerns" are normally highest on Stages 0, 1, 2, and lowest on Stages 4, 5, and 6. The overall profile for the district "suggests and reflects the interested, not terribly overconcerned, positively disposed nonuser" (Hall, et. al, 1977, p. 36).

These results were very surprising to the first author since the LRC concept had been implemented in Hays Consolidated ISD in 1976, and this evaluation was conducted in the fall of 1977. She had assumed that the school personnel would know what the innovation was and would be using it. It was her expectation that the data would indicate high levels of concern in the last three stages -- consequence, collaboration, and refocusing.

After reviewing the data, several of the participants were interviewed. While most of those interviewed were users of the LRC program, few understood

the concept or philosophy. The high level of "unawareness" of the program apparently resulted from confusion between the concepts of an LRC and that of a school library program.

As a result of this investigation, the project's implementation activities were modified so as to place additional attention on increasing teachers' awareness and knowledge of the LRC program. Additional Stages of Concern data will be collected in order to gauge the success of these efforts.

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Appendix A

Learning Resources Center

Evaluation Questionnaire

Learning Resources Center

Evaluation Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine what people who are using or thinking about using various programs are concerned about at various times during the innovation adoption process. The items were developed from typical responses of school and college teachers who ranged from no knowledge at all about various programs to many years experience in using them. Therefore, a good part of the items on this questionnaire may appear to be of little relevance or irrelevant to you at this time. For the completely irrelevant items, please circle "0" on the scale. Other items will represent those concerns you do have, in varying degrees of intensity, and should be marked higher on the scale.

For example:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 (7)	This statement is very true of me at this time.
0 1 2 3 (4) 5 6 7	This statement is somewhat true of me now.
0 (1) 2 3 4 5 6 7	This statement is not at all true of me at this time.
(0) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	This statement seems irrelevant to me.

Please respond to the items in terms of your present concerns, or how you feel about your involvement or potential involvement with the Learning Resources Center. We do not hold to any one definition of this program, so please think of it in terms of your own perceptions of what it involves. Remember to respond to each item in terms of your present concerns about your involvement or potential involvement with the Learning Resources Center.

Thank you for taking time to complete this task.

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Hays Consolidated ISD
LRC System

LRC Evaluation

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not true of me now — Somewhat true of me now — Very true of me now

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am concerned about students' attitudes toward the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I now know of some other approaches that might work better
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I don't even know what the LRC program is.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am concerned about not having enough time to organize myself each day.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I would like to help other faculty in their use of the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I have a very limited knowledge about the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I would like to know the effect of reorganization on my professional status.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am concerned about conflict between my interests and my responsibilities (concerning using the LRC program).
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am concerned about revising my use of the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I would like to develop working relationships with both our faculty and outside faculty using the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am concerned about how the LRC program affects students.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I am not concerned about the LRC program.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I would like to know who will make the decisions in the new LRC system.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not true of me now			Somewhat true of me now			Very true of me now		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to discuss the possibility of using the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know resources are available if we decide to adopt the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I am concerned about my inability to manage all the LRC program requires.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know how my teaching or administration is supposed to change.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to familiarize other departments or persons with the progress of this new approach.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I am concerned about evaluating my impact on students in regard to the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to revise the LRC's instructional approach.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I am completely occupied with other things.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to modify our use of the LRC program based on the experiences of our students.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Although I don't know about the LRC program, I am concerned about things in the area.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to excite my students about their part in this approach.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I am concerned about time spent working with nonacademic problems related to the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know what the use of the LRC program will require in the immediate future.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not true of me now			Somewhat true of me now				Very true of me now	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to coordinate my effort with others to maximize the LRC's effects.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to have more information on time and energy commitments required by the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know what other faculty are doing in this area.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	At this time, I am not interested in learning about the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to determine how to supplement, enhance or replace the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like feedback from students to change the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know how my role will change when I am using the LRC program.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Coordination of tasks and people is taking too much of my time.
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I would like to know how this LRC program is better than what we have now.